

Nevada Libraries Reopening Guidelines

June 2020

Nevada State Library Archives and Public Records/Nevada Library Association

Introduction

Adapting to the disturbance caused by COVID-19 has been not only disorienting but has also driven swift increase in online service and access. While our buildings have been closed, library staff have quickly developed innovative ways to continue to deliver library services remotely. Our digital library and virtual services are always available. Nevada libraries have all expanded digital resource offerings, continued to serve the patrons online and by telephone, made Wi-Fi accessible in our parking lots and more, and offered both educational and entertainment opportunities for students, families and people staying at home.

And like every other industry, Nevada's libraries are focused on what comes next. Developing re-opening plans that align with public health directives and guidelines to protect the health and well-being of library employees and the public is of utmost importance. Libraries are high-contact, busy places. Step-by-step and thoughtful re-opening stages are being developed in order to safely provide services while supporting continued progress to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Like other business, our re-opening plans will have flexibility to augment opening of facilities or condense as needed. The particulars of these plans will ultimately be determined and enacted on a local level, working with local jurisdictions and following the guidance of both state, local public health agencies and the Local Empowerment Advisory Panel (LEAP). As we plan a return to service, libraries will generally follow a re-opening plan that involves the following:

- The guidelines and best practices will be updated based on new scientific knowledge about COVID-19, information about the effectiveness of control measures county by county, or the application of statewide standards from Governor Sisolak. (For example, the best practices may be different depending on if Nevada as a whole is moving down or up in alert levels.)
- Different parts of the state may be at different levels of opening. We can move up or down between phases as needed.
- Online services will continue to operate at any phase.
- Restrictions at the different phases of opening are cumulative. For example at phase one face masks and or face shields are recommended. So, unless a specific restriction is lifted or changed it follows into the next phase.

"Governors should consider reopening in phases separated by 2 – 3 weeks. After each phase of reopening, state public health officials should review the numbers of new COVID-19 daily case counts, hospitalizations, and deaths carefully along with other syndromic surveillance tools. The results of reopening decisions will take 2 to 3 weeks to be reflected in those numbers. If case counts, hospitalizations, and deaths go up in that time, further actions in reopening should be paused, and steps should be taken to get control of the rising numbers." John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health Center for Health Security Study: Public Health Principles for a Phased Reopening During COVID-19 Guidance for Governors https://www.centerforhealthsecurity.org/our-work/pubs_archive/pubs-pdfs/2020/200417-reopening-guidance-governors.pdf

The reopening levels are determined by local health authorities and Governor Sisolak and specify the public health and social measures to be taken in the fight against COVID-19. Further guidelines and best practices are available at <https://nsla.nv.gov/COVID19/librarians>

Phase Zero - Stay Home for Nevada

Risk Assessment

All businesses closed. All libraries are recommended to be closed in this phase. While re-opening process has begun, it is a possibility to see a spike in cases that results in a return to Phase Zero - Stay Home for Nevada.

SUGGESTED STEPS FOR LIBRARIES

- Libraries are 100% virtual: Promote virtual collection, e-books, downloadable audiobooks, and databases.
- Promote virtual services: Virtual Storytime, Book Club, virtual reference, virtual programs, and similar services
- Provide library board with consistent updates – communicate what you know when you know it
- Hold special meetings when necessary to talk about progress.
- Utilize social media to get updates out to the public quickly
- Logistics – Planning to include:
 - Sanitization and hygiene
 - Programming and meeting rooms
 - Interlibrary loan
 - Community needs and outreach
 - Continuation of services under each phase

Phase I - Battle Born Beginning

Risk Assessment

Consistent and sustainable downward trajectory of COVID-19 cases and decrease in the trend of COVID-19 hospitalizations over a 14-day period.

Measured by:

- Decline in people testing positive.
- Decrease in trend of COVID-19 hospitalizations.
- Availability of wide-spread point of care testing, largescale case contact tracing.

Range of Measures

Can be applied county by county, system by system, or statewide - Local governments are responsible for enforcement, and the Local Empowerment Advisory Panel (LEAP) helps inform the Directives issued by the Governor as the state moves through each phase.

- May reopen under stringent restrictions – and prioritize access based on critical services.
- Strong restrictions limit all people movement and contact.
- Regularly disinfect surfaces, maintain social distancing and use personal protective equipment.
- No gatherings of ten or more.
- Vulnerable populations should remain at home.
- Continue telework programs if teleworking is an option for your Library; if it is not, do your best to physically distance staff from one another in space of the library. Consider implementing staggered work schedules to further socially distance, and ensure staff use PPE.
- Close common areas.
- May provide special accommodations for personnel who are members of a vulnerable population.
- Some staff work in the building according to set schedule for distancing (one person in work area at a time); providing limited reference, handling mail; processing materials, taking care of fiscal, personnel, and statistical tasks.
- May redeploy staff to other departments.

SUGGESTED STEPS FOR LIBRARIES

- Libraries are recommended to keep the physical library closed to the public during this time period.
- Train staff on implementing the re-opening checklist – this is a very important step so staff know what to expect and for a consistent level of service. (Appendix 1)
- Employees return to work at libraries behind closed doors to prepare spaces and services for new modes of service delivery and eventual public use, as well as managing quarantined items that have been returned to the library.
- All staff should be equipped with PPE upon entering any building. Equipment should be provided by the library or higher funding authority. In-building work should not commence without a staff training in proper hygiene and use of PPE. Even under controlled environments, exposure to COVID 19 can spread rapidly resulting in a retrench of services to Phase Zero.
- Clean and disinfect shared surfaces.
- Establish hygiene protocols.
- Maintain sufficient supply of disinfecting products and personal protective equipment, such as disposable gloves, face masks/shields.
- Core elements of shared resource service models align with public health directives and guidelines.
- Plan and have staff training for expansion of services in Phase 2.
- PR and communication with community/stakeholders is vitally important.
- Establish regular communication with library governing board.
- For libraries with a governing board – board may review and approve plan for library's direction at this stage, (the plan will inform staff, stakeholder and library users of reopening steps and support community expectations)
- Library staff should continue to emphasize virtual services. Ex. "Your library may be closed but the digital library is always open."
- Projects library staff can perform for the public during this time period:
 - Virtual Storytime
 - Virtual Reference
 - Promotion of E-book, Downloadable Audiobooks, and Databases
 - Virtual Programs
 - Library staff training through services like Lynda.com and State Library Training
 - Virtual Book clubs
 - Social Media Campaigns (Librarians at home, Librarians working behind the scenes)
 - Expanding Wi-Fi signal past the library (example library parking lot)
 - Virtual job search and resume help (guides, virtual reference, webinars)

Estimated requirements to implement action(s) see [OSHA guidelines](#)

- Allow time in the workday to accomplish key actions.
- Adequate budget and access to suppliers for products.
- Have adequate staff available, which may depend on number of staff in vulnerable categories, number of staff that are healthy, and/or number of staff potentially exposed and thus requiring isolation (an emphasis here, perhaps that this is one of the most volatile categories to meet, as health and exposure can quickly change.)
- Consider having staff work staggered shifts if necessary, for social distancing.
- Ability to block off physical collections and/or other certain portions of facilities.
- Plexiglass and/or other physical barriers to ensure social distancing at staffed public service points
- PPE available to staff (what kind and what amount may be up to LEAP.
- Statewide PPE guidance, for example wearing face masks or face shields when in public, is recommended.
- Ability to implement social distancing strategies for patrons, such as:
 - tape/stickers on floor that indicate appropriate distancing for line management,
 - outdoor lines in hot weather,
 - ability to limit chairs / tables / computers so that patrons are distanced (this may include ability to put certain tables/chairs in storage),

- adequate cleaning supplies available,
 - adequate time/staff to perform cleaning practices
- Ability to implement local health considerations for the public (essentially, what's the local situation like, is there a lot of risk or not)
- Libraries may choose to provide curbside services provided they have the staff, PPE, cleaning supplies and other items available. (Appendix 2)

Phase II - Silver State Stabilization

Risk Assessment

- Reduction in community transmissions.
- New clusters may emerge but can be controlled through testing and contact tracing.
- Large number of activities come back over time, under social distancing, strict hygiene protocols and occupancy controls.
- Adequate evaluation of trends in reporting data so health officials can ease restrictions without increasing public risk.

Range of Measures

- Broader opening of services under strict social distancing measures, hygiene and occupancy controls.
- Some staff work in the building; some may continue telecommuting. Consider implementing staggered work schedules among staff in conjunction with telework to maintain appropriate distancing. Collections work caught-up (processing checks/corrections, shelving); circulation updated; files/work transferred back to office workstations; office work routines restored; security services restored; interlibrary loan services resume for libraries and reference services continue.

SUGGESTED STEPS FOR LIBRARIES

- Basic library services are offered inside the buildings with extra precautions, following social distancing and transmission mitigation guidelines. This stage could potentially include limited or no availability of shared accommodations like seating, collaborative workspaces and public computers.
- Staff training and communication continue. Reinforcement on new processes and updates based on proclamations from the Governor, LEAP, and local officials.
 - Include training to address staff anxiety, stress and dealing with potential protesters and dissenters
- PR and communication with community/stakeholders is vitally important.

Estimated requirements to implement steps

- Requirements continue from Phase I.
- Forge direct connections with local school districts to support families and teachers regarding their most pressing needs.

Phase III - On the Road to Home Means Nevada

Risk Assessment

- Fewer household transmissions are occurring.
- Fewer single or isolated cluster outbreaks.
- Measures are eased on some gatherings.
- Continued widespread point-of-care testing and robust ability to implement appropriate tracing, isolation and quarantines.

- Therapeutics are available to help mitigate the risk of spread or alternatively a vaccine has been developed and tested for safety and efficacy.

Range of Measures

- All staff work in the building, collections work caught-up (processing checks/corrections, shelving); circulation updated; files/work transferred back to office workstations; office work routines restored; security services restored; interlibrary loan services resume for libraries and reference services continue.
- Continue sharp focus on providing online content and programs and safe access to physical delivery vs. keeping buildings open for extended hours each day.

SUGGESTED STEPS FOR LIBRARIES

- Expanded services are offered inside the buildings with the restoration of some suspended services, such as educational programs and library use of public meeting rooms, if allowed by public health directives and guidelines.
- Staff training and communication continue. Reinforcement on new processes and updates based on proclamations from the Governor, LEAP, and local officials.
 - Include training to address staff anxiety, stress and dealing with protesters and dissenters.
- Work to identify the services, virtual and otherwise, that are working and benefiting the community that should continue once the requirement of social distancing ends.
- PR and communication with community/stakeholders is vitally important.
- Continue communication with library governing board.
- Incorporate revisions and refinements into established processes to reflect the changing landscape of the reopening phases based on local conditions and reopening phases.

Estimated requirements to implement steps

- Some requirements may continue from Phase I and 2.
- Determine if protective measures (face coverings, gloves) are still needed for staff and public based on local conditions.
- Determine if cleaning and disinfecting intervals can be reduced.

Phase IV - Home Means Nevada – Our New Normal

Risk Assessment

- COVID-19 is largely controlled across the country.
- Isolated household transmission could be occurring in Nevada.
- New normal will allow us to ease away from social and physical distancing measures.
- The availability of therapeutics that can help mitigate the risk of spread or reduce serious outcomes in those with interventions or alternatively a vaccine has been developed and tested for safety and efficacy. Currently, there is no realistic timeline yet from any of the scientific experts for achieving this level.

Range of Measures

- Rethink staff opportunities and how to establish and train cross-departmental flexible teams.
- Remind elected officials of the role that public libraries play and how the mission and spirit of library services benefit communities.
- Communicate the unique roles libraries play to provide, and support makerspaces and 3D printing, virtual services, workforce development and essential services for vulnerable populations.

SUGGESTED STEPS FOR LIBRARIES

- PR and communication with community/stakeholders is vitally important.
- Continue communication with library governing board.

- Staff training and communication continue. Reinforcement on new processes and updates based on proclamations from the Governor, LEAP, and local officials.
- Utilize social media to get updates out to the public quickly.
- Determine if closed areas in earlier phases will be reopened.
- Determine if some services will no longer be provided and/or changes in the way they are provided.
- Prepare communications to display how essential the library is to the ecosystem of the community, map out all current services and programming.
- *Celebrate successes!*

Estimated requirements to implement steps

- Some requirements may continue from Phase I, 2 and 3.
- Sharp focus on things that can be impacted now, prepare but be flexible.



Nevada libraries phased reopening --- things to think about as COVID-19 restrictions are lifted

Research Brief No. 1, April 28, 2020
addressing COVID-19 together

Discussions have begun about how to develop unified guidelines and best practices regarding public and social health measures to reopen our libraries. This checklist aims at helping library and information agency professionals gain focus on a range of measures that may be applied to using spaces during re-opening phases of Nevada due to COVID-19.

Policies and Procedures addressing:

- ☐ Library sanitization, hygiene and social distancing
- ☐ Emergency preparedness plan that includes contingency staffing
- ☐ When/how plan review and revision
- ☐ Library hours of operation
 - If so, how? (ie: limited open and closed days or parts of the day; shortened to allow for cleaning, shelving, and sanitizing – other?)
- ☐ Library operations budget be amended to provide for necessary resources to accommodate operational pivots (i.e., sanitizing, programming, supplies)
- ☐ Prohibited actions / general conduct in your current library policy
- ☐ Programs and service amendments
 - If so, how?
 - Reference assistance
 - Readers advisory
 - Interlibrary loan
 - Loan periods
 - Renewals
 - Reserves
 - Story times
 - In person programs
 - Outreach Services
 - Internet access
 - Teacher and School programs
 - Collection development
- ☐ Equipment use amendments
 - If so, how?
 - Computers
 - Printers
 - Copiers
 - Other

General Standard Precautions

- Personal hygiene and hand washing
- Social distancing
- Staff training on and demonstrated competency in general with standard precautions related to social distancing and hand washing
- Knowing when to use alcohol-based hand rub vs. washing with soap and water
- Hand washing stations in the library, besides the restrooms
- Scheduled protocol for routine cleaning and disinfecting surfaces
- Dedicated staff to sanitation measures I.e.: wiping self-check areas, light switches, door jams, tables, computers, building entry locks etc.?
- Areas demarcated at 6' distances
- Implementing curbside pickup processes synced with community opening phases
- Ample trash receptacles

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Staff trained to know what PPE should be used at the library for what task
- Identify PPE disposal areas to eliminate transmission risk
- Hand hygiene supplies located proximately to PPE disposal areas
- Supply refurbishment process for PPE and hygiene
- COVID-19 supply clerk
- Alternate PPE and supply strategies

Transmission-Based Precautions

- Staff training regarding transmission-based precautions
 - Circulating materials
 - Staff interaction
- Monitoring for compliance with precautions
- Notifying appropriate staff of their responsibilities in these circumstances

Patron Entry

- Procedure on patron screening and entry, including special circumstances under which a patron may receive focused support i.e.: help with job search or student / school issues
- Communicating special circumstances procedures
- Providing patrons education on hygiene and social distancing while at the library
 - Providing masks or face shields
- Define enforcement practices including social distancing and hygiene
- Define procedure for reporting a patron with known or suspected COVID-19

Infection Surveillance

- Surveillance information, including any trends or changes, communicated within the community

Education, Monitoring

- Communicating with collaborating library partners and the community regarding library services and operations status

- Signage for social distancing and proper hygiene throughout the library
- Record of staff training on:
 - COVID-19 symptoms, transmission, screening criteria, and work exclusions
 - Updates to COVID-19 guidance and the local situation
 - What to do if symptoms develop while working, including who to notify that they are leaving the library

Emergency Preparedness – Staffing

- Planning for a widespread staff shortage
 - Cross-training staff to take on critical responsibilities in the event of a staff shortage
- Defining expectations on staff in regard to policing/enforcing new procedures.
- Training plans and resources about dealing with patrons in regard to social distancing/amount of time in library, etc

Curbside Pick-up for Libraries

• Libraries can offer curbside pick-up for items patrons place on hold or through another type of reservation-based system. Patrons should place a hold in the library's online catalog or make an appointment in order to make use of the curbside pick-up service. Libraries should consider how to support equity issues for patrons without mobile devices or internet access at home. For example, promote a phone number for readers' advisory services and check-out.

- In addition to making materials like books and movies available, libraries may consider single-use projects (like take-home craft kits) that can be linked to a library's online programming.
- Libraries should limit loans of games and toys.

• Once the library item is available, patrons should receive an email or phone call indicating that the item is ready for curbside pick-up. Libraries should put signage in appropriate, clearly-marked places to indicate the curbside pick-up instructions, e.g. where to park.

• Libraries may have patrons call the library when they arrive at the curbside pick-up location.

• Libraries should institute a contactless curbside pick-up system. For example, this could involve staff placing the pre-ordered items on a table or in a cart near the parking lot or designated curbside pick-up location with instructions that patrons wait to retrieve the items until library staff and other patrons have left the area. Items should be placed in labeled bags for ease of pick-up and to avoid unnecessary contact with the items.

• If a patron has mobility issues, libraries should provide accommodations, such as placing bagged items on the hood or in the trunk of a patron's vehicle. If this is not the contactless method the library is already instituting, patrons should request this when calling the library upon arrival.

• If feasible, libraries should implement contactless return system. Libraries may also accept returned items in carts or other containers that can be isolated and remain untouched for at least three days before handling or re-shelving.

- The federal Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), in collaboration with OCLC and Battelle, is creating and distributing science-based information and recommended practices designed to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 to staff and visitors who are engaging in the delivery or use of museum, library, and archival services.
- This research will include testing and developing guidance for cleaning and disinfecting of library materials.
- Visit <https://www.webjunction.org/explore-topics/COVID-19-research-project.html> to receive project updates.

• Libraries should consider additional steps when instituting curbside pick-up, including:

- Discuss if security costs may increase to support staff entering or exiting the facility or to manage temporary changes in the library procedures.

- Consider only offering curbside service at certain branches first to ensure proper staffing and security.
- Consider supporting physical distancing for staff in the building by implementing one-way markers in the library stacks.
- Share plans with community organizations, local businesses, schools and other stakeholders. Ask for help in sending out information about the library's services and to review translations for cultural appropriateness.
- For medium/large library buildings, weigh the feasibility of adding temporary handwashing stations for staff if needed to support frequent handwashing.

California Department of Public Health, COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Retail

<https://covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-retail.pdf>